

'Manjolai Samathuvapuram' creation sought for rehabilitation of workers

They have agreed for rehabilitation measures but want a better alternative and sought a compensation of ₹25 lakh for relocation, says advocate

The Hindu Bureau
MADURAI

The former workers of Manjolai tea estates have urged the State government to set up 'Manjolai Samathuvapuram' in Tirunelveli district for the rehabilitation of the workers. They said that they had lived in unity in Manjolai tea estates and wished to continue to live together in unity, they said.

Addressing a press meet in Madurai on Saturday organised by People's Watch, advocate I. Robert Chandrakumar said that these workers had preferred an appeal before the Supreme Court.

The petition filed by P. Amutha, A. Chandra and



People's Watch executive director Henri Tiphagne addressing the media in Madurai on Saturday. R. ASHOK

A. John Kennedy, all former workers of the tea estates, was pending before the court, he said.

He said that the workers have accepted the Madras High Court judgment. But, the rehabilitation mea-

asures suggested by the State government were not sufficient.

The workers are mostly

elderly people. Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (TNHUBD) tenements will not be suitable for them. They have also been assured livestock as part of rehabilitation measures. Will the livestock be tied in these tenements, he asked.

The workers have agreed for the rehabilitation measures but want a better alternative. Apart from the 'Manjolai Samathuvapuram', the workers also have sought a compensation of ₹25 lakh for the relocation from Manjolai estates, he said.

Mr. Robert Chandrakumar said that the workers had resided in Manjolai estates for decades. They have set up memorials of their forefathers and plac-

es of worship like Vanapetchiamman. No man animal conflict has been reported in this region. Therefore, the people should be allowed to visit these places for festivals.

Even now the government officials are constantly questioning the people in a threatening tone. Let them not do so as the case is still pending before the Supreme Court, he said.

People's Watch executive director Henri Tiphagne said that the people wanted to come out of Manjolai tea estates with respect.

They should be guaranteed the visitation rights and the 'Manjolai Samathuvapuram' should be established for their benefit, he said.